

Learning with The Irrawaddy, No. 38

To accompany the **September 2009** issue of The Irrawaddy magazine.

Selected article: *A Visit to Chinatown*

TEACHER'S NOTES

Here is the 38th issue of 'Learning with The Irrawaddy', a monthly educational supplement to The Irrawaddy magazine. It is designed for reading/writing, English or social studies classes in Post-10 schools and adult education classes on the Burma border. With each issue of The Irrawaddy, we select one article and design some learning activities for it. The language level in this month's article is intermediate.

NOTE: YOU DO NOT HAVE TO DO ALL OF THE ACTIVITIES LISTED IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE. YOU CAN CHOOSE WHICH ACTIVITIES ARE MOST APPROPRIATE DEPENDING ON HOW MUCH TIME YOU HAVE, AND THE LEVEL OF ABILITY OF YOUR LEARNERS.

In this issue we have included:

- ★ this teacher's guide
- ★ a copy of the student worksheet
- ★ A copy of The Irrawaddy magazine
- ★ a copy of the article from The Irrawaddy magazine

A. Activities before reading

Activity 1 Discussion

These discussion questions are designed to get your class warmed up, speaking English and thinking about how different ethnic groups live together in their community. In some cases, this might not be an appropriate discussion, particularly if there is only one ethnic group where you are living. You can answer these questions as a whole class discussion, or give them as reflection for homework before beginning this article.

Activity 2 Cartoon

Although it may be hard to see because of the photocopy and the way the picture is drawn, here are some observations students could get from the picture:

- It is very crowded – this might mean that Chinatown is popular or that there are lots of Chinese people who live there (we can't tell what kind of people are in the streets from the drawing).
- There is Chinese writing on the flags/banners in the streets.
- The roof of the building in the back is unusual – it is a kind of Chinese architecture.

Based on these observations, students should be able to say something like:

Chinatown is a place where Chinese people can live in their own kind of buildings and read things written in Chinese. Or: Chinatown is a place that isn't in China but that looks very Chinese.

Activity 3 Vocabulary*Answers:*

1.c. 2.e. 3.g. 4.a. 5.f. 6.d. 7.b.

Activity 4 Vocabulary Practice*Answers:*

- | | |
|------------|---------------|
| a. Influx | e. Sentiment |
| b. Quota | f. Bounded |
| c. Bastion | g. Colleagues |
| d. Boom | |

B. Activities during reading**Activity 5 Reading Comprehension***Answers:*

- China town is located inside Mahabandoola Street (North boundary), Swedagon Pagoda Lan (East) Strand Road (South) and Swedaugdan Lan (West). See map on page 4 for more details.
- One fifth
- 1850
- There is good food (paragraph 1 & 3), it is a nice change from Burmese culture (paragraph 2), there is a vibrant street life (paragraph 4), it is economically prosperous (paragraphs 5 & 6)
- The Chinese culture may overwhelm Burmese culture (paragraphs 7,9,10,13), Rangoon may begin to look more Chinese than Burmese (paragraphs 7 &15)
- Most Chinese immigrants come from Yunnan.
- There are 6.4 million Burmese living in Rangoon but the article doesn't say how many Chinese are there.

Activity 6 Summarising

Because there are 15 paragraphs in the article, this activity may be quite long for students to complete individually. Students could complete this task in small groups, and for fun, race against each other to see which group can finish first.

Answers:

- | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|
| a. 11 | f. 7 | k. 8 |
| b. 4 | g. 9 | l. 6 |
| c. 10 | h. 1 | m. 14 |
| d. 13 | i. 12 | n. 2 |
| e. 3 | j. 5 | o. 5 |

Activity 7 Topic Sentence*Answer:*

b) is the best answer because it captures the point of the whole article.

- only discusses the positive parts of Chinatown
- is only mentioned in paragraphs 11, 12 and 13.
- is only mentioned in paragraphs 7 & 8

C. Activities after reading

Activity 8 Interpreting Quotes

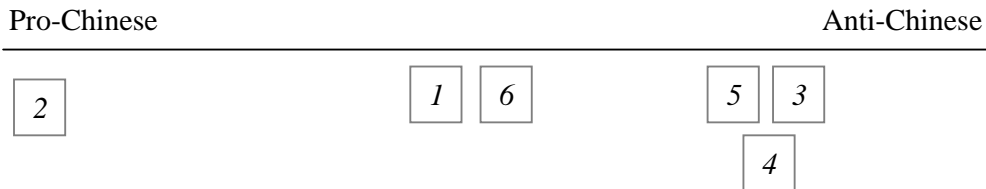
Answers:

- | | | |
|----------|-----------|----------|
| 1. e. V | 3. a. III | 5. d. VI |
| 2. c. IV | 4. f. I | 6. b. II |

Activity 9

The exact position of each speaker along this scale will probably vary a bit from student to student. The most pro-Chinese speaker, however, should be #2. Speaker #1 is only a little pro-Chinese, but is mostly neutral and speakers 3, 4 and 5 are hold fairly similar positions which are anti-Chinese.

Answer:



Activity 10

Bias

Answers:

- a) Looking at the scale above it seems like the journalist did not write a very balanced article. There are more quotes on the anti-Chinese side (3) and less quotes on the pro-Chinese side (just one).
- b) The journalist seems to be anti-Chinese.
- c) There are a number of possible answers including:
 - Information about how Burmese people have benefitted from Chinese immigrants or Chinatown
 - Information on the difficulties Chinese immigrants face in Burma
 - Information on how Chinatown has benefited Rangoon as a whole

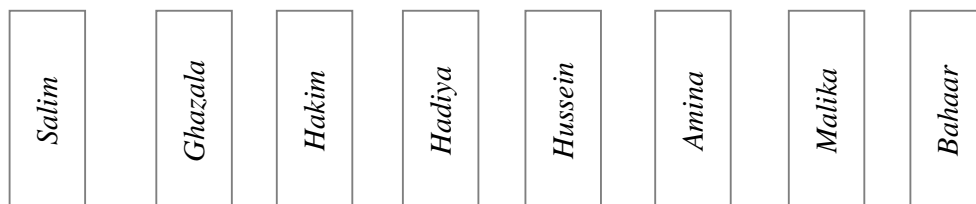
Activity 11

Journalism

Depending on the level of your students you may want to break this activity down into smaller steps like we have done with the Chinatown article in Activity 9. Once students have identified the position of each speaker, then they should be able to pick one speaker who is pro-refugee, one speaker who is anti-refugee and one neutral speaker. It doesn't really matter who the students pick, as long as they represent these three positions in their selections.

Pro-Refugee

Anti-Refugee



Example Answers:

Salim, Hadiya, Bahaar / Ghazala, Hussein, Malika / Hakim, Hadiya, Amina.

Activity 12 Research

With your class brainstorm some important issues in your community. Issues will change depending on where you are, but here are some ideas:

- The new Burmese constitution (do you support it? Does it bring hope?)
- New arrivals into camp (should new arrivals be let into refugee camps? Should Burman refugees be allowed in?)
- Thai in schools (should Thai be taught? Should it be required?)

It is very important that every item on your list be a real issue. You can test to find out if it is an issue or not by asking your class how they feel about it. If everyone feels the same way, it's probably not an issue.

Brainstorm a list of questions with your students. These might include:

- What is your opinion about this question?
- Why do you believe that?
- Do you have any experience or evidence to support your view?
- What do you think about people who think differently from yourself on this issue?
- What do you think will happen on this issue in the future?

Make sure students are aware of how to conduct a good interview. They should introduce themselves and tell the person they are interviewing what they are doing and ask if they can ask some questions.

When students are finished, make sure they have interviewed different kinds of people and listened to different opinions. The three quotes they should have picked should represent both sides of the issue and one neutral position.

